

National Mediation Board



Representation Manual

Notice:

This Manual provides general procedural guidance to the National Mediation Board's staff with respect to the processing of representation cases before the NMB. Such procedural guidance is not required by or subject to the Administrative Procedure Act. The provisions of this Manual are neither obligatory upon the Members of the Board nor do they constitute the exclusive procedure for the NMB's investigation of representation matters pursuant to the Railway Labor Act.

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Chief of Staff

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REPRESENTATION MANUAL

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NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD REPRESENTATION MANUAL

1.0 THE AUTHORITY TO INVESTIGATE-INITIAL FILING AND NMB PROCESSING

1.01 Definitions

1.01-1 Statutory Authorization

45 U.S.C. § 152, Ninth (Section 2, Ninth), of the Railway Labor Act (RLA) authorizes the National Mediation Board (NMB or Board) to investigate a representation dispute and to take a secret ballot of the employees or to utilize any other appropriate method of ascertaining the names of representatives of the employees involved.

1.01-2 Representation Matter

A representation matter is an investigation initiated by the filing of an application with the NMB under Section 2, Ninth, of the RLA.

1.01-3 Application to Investigate Representation Disputes

The process for filing an application can be found in the National Mediation Board Rules (NMB Rules) §1203.2 (29 CFR §1203.2).

1.01-4 Investigation

During the investigation of a representation application, the NMB will address any question concerning representation in accordance with the RLA, the NMB Rules (29 CFR §§1201-1209), this Manual, and any other directives the NMB issues.

1.01-5 Carrier

Carrier by rail is defined at 45 U.S.C. § 151, First of the RLA. Carrier by air is described at § 181, of the RLA.

1.01-6 Participants

Participants in a representation matter are: the carrier, any labor organization(s) or individual(s) seeking to represent a

carrier's employees or any incumbent representative of a carrier's employees. The term "participant" includes parties defined below.

1.01-7 Parties

Parties are any labor organization(s) or individual(s) seeking to represent a carrier's employees and any incumbent representative of the carrier's employees. Carriers are not parties under Section 2, Ninth, however, they are under a statutory obligation to provide information and documentation to the NMB in representation matters.

1.01-8 R-Case Docket

Upon receipt of a proper application, the application is docketed and assigned an "R-Case" identification number.

1.01-9 CR-File Pre-docket

Representation applications requiring a pre-docketing investigation will be assigned a "CR-File" identification number.

1.02 Applications

Applications for the services of the NMB under Section 2, Ninth, to investigate representation disputes among a carriers' employees must be made on Form NMB-1, available from the NMB's Office of Legal Affairs or at www.nmb.gov. Only applications with original signatures submitted to the NMB's office in Washington, D.C., and accompanied by original authorization cards will be accepted. Applications and authorization cards will not be accepted by facsimile or electronic mail. The application must meet the following requirements set forth in NMB Rules §1203.2 (29 CFR §1203.2):

- 1) It must be signed by the chief executive officer of the international or national organization or other specifically designated and authorized officers.
- 2) It must specify the craft or class of employees and the estimated number of employees in the craft or class.
- 3) It must identify whether there is an incumbent representative.

- 4) It must be accompanied by signed authorization cards from the employees in the craft or class in dispute. The authorizations must comply with the requirements in Manual Sections 3.0 and 17.0 and NMB Rules §1206.4 (29 CFR § 1206.4).
- 5) A Notice(s) of Appearance for not more than three representatives must be attached to the application. The representative who will be the primary contact for the Investigator must be one of the three.

1.03 Upon receipt of a proper application, an identification number will be assigned and preliminary correspondence will be initiated. The correspondence will identify the Investigator(s) assigned. General information on representation matters not pending with the NMB is available to the public through the NMB's Development and Technology Department. Information on specific representation matters will be available only to the designated representatives in those matters.

1.1 General Communication Guidelines

1.101 Unless otherwise specified in this Manual, the Chief of Staff's Office is the contact point for representation matters filed with the NMB. The Chief of Staff typically will designate a specific NMB Investigator on each case. The Investigator may designate other NMB employees to perform certain tasks.

1.102 Documents may be filed with the NMB by hand delivery, U.S. mail, express delivery, or facsimile at (202) 692-5085 (applications and supporting authorizations require original documents). Documents may be accepted by electronic mail at the discretion of the Investigator. In addition, documents in excess of thirty (30) pages will not be accepted by facsimile. Failure to complete timely service due to errors of a delivery company or difficulties with facsimile transmissions will not excuse untimely, partial or illegible submissions.

1.2 Service of Submissions to the NMB and Notice of Appearance

1.201 Submissions, including Notices of Appearance, to the NMB, except privileged documents, shall be simultaneously served on all representatives by the same method as used for service on the NMB, if available, or if unavailable, by a substantially similar method. All submissions must be accompanied by a signed certificate of service. Submissions not in compliance with the

foregoing simultaneous service provisions will not be considered except in extraordinary circumstances.

- 1.202 Within five (5) business days of the date of the NMB's initial correspondence, the representatives of the participants who have not done so must file a Notice of Appearance with the NMB, including name, title, address, telephone and FAX number(s), and e-mail address(es). Notices of Appearance will be accepted from no more than three (3) representatives per participant. The representative who will be the primary contact for the Investigator must be one of the three representatives. Only representatives listed on a Notice of Appearance will receive documents relating to the case from the NMB or other participants.

1.3 Ex Parte Communications

- 1.301 An "ex parte communication" is an oral communication to the NMB in which all participants are not present at the time it is made, or a written communication to the NMB not served simultaneously on all participants. Ex parte communications must not be conducted with the Members of the NMB or their Confidential Assistants. In addition, ex parte communications are prohibited between the participants and NMB Counsel assigned to any appellate matter including: Motions for Reconsideration; Allegations of Election Interference; Craft or Class Determinations; and/or Jurisdictional Issues. Ex parte communications are permitted with the Investigator(s) assigned to the case when the Investigator is engaged in the fact finding phase of a case.

2.0 COMMENCING THE INVESTIGATION

2.1 Investigator's Role and Responsibility

The Investigator will determine the scope and the form of the investigation, including whether to conduct the investigation on-site. If the participants wish to raise any particular issues(s) in the representation matter, the issue(s) and supporting evidence or documentation must be submitted in writing within time limit(s) established by the Investigator.

2.2 Access to and Copies of Carrier Books and Records

The NMB has a statutory right to have access to and to make copies of carrier books and records (Section 2, Ninth). The Investigator will advise the carrier of these statutory rights whenever the Investigator determines that carrier books and records are necessary to the investigation.

2.3 Cut-off Date

For determining eligibility to vote, the cut-off date is the last day of the payroll period ending before the day the NMB received the application.

2.4 List of Potential Eligible Voters and Signature Samples

The carrier must serve three (3) copies of a system-wide alphabetized list of potential eligible voters on the Investigator and serve one (1) copy on each participants' representative. The NMB requires the Carrier to provide a copy of the alphabetized list on a disk in Excel spreadsheet format for the NMB's administrative use only.

The list of potential eligible voters must include all individuals in the craft or class with an employee-employer relationship as of the cut-off date. The list must identify each employee's full name, the last four digits of the employee's social security number, the job classification or title, and the duty station or location.

The carrier must also provide the NMB with one (1) copy of legible, alphabetized signature samples for each employee on the list. Examples of acceptable signature samples include tax-withholding forms and employment and insurance applications. The signature samples must be in the same order as the names on the list of potential eligible voters.

2.5 Delivery of Documents

The list of potential eligible voters and signature samples must be delivered to the NMB by the deadline set by the Chief of Staff. When there is an on-site investigation, the list and signature samples must be delivered to the Investigator upon arrival on the carrier's property.

3.0 EVIDENCE OF DISPUTE - AUTHORIZATIONS

3.1 Form and Content of Authorizations

Any type of authorization is sufficient if it includes the applicant's name and indicates that the employee either desires representation by the applicant for purposes of collective bargaining or desires a representation election. Each authorization must be signed and dated in the employee's own handwriting, See NMB Rules §1206.3 (29 CFR §1206.3). Although not required, it is recommended that the authorization include the employee's job title and employee number. If the carrier does not utilize employee identification numbers, the authorization should include the last four digits of the employee's social security number. Petitions are not accepted.

Authorizations submitted to the NMB must be in alphabetical order on a system-wide basis. Failure to provide authorization cards in alphabetical order on a system-wide basis may result in the return of authorizations to the submitter. Duplicate authorizations should not be submitted.

3.2 Age of Authorizations

Authorizations must be dated within one year from the date of the application for the NMB's services. See also NMB Rules §1206.3 (29 CFR §1206.3).

3.3 Acceptance of Additional Authorizations

An applicant or intervenor may present the Investigator with additional authorizations up until 4 p.m., eastern time, on the day the Investigator receives the applicable list and signature samples.

3.4 Cancellation or Revocation of Authorizations

The Investigator will neither accept nor honor proposed cancellations or revocations of authorizations. Individuals seeking to revoke their authorizations must go through the party to whom the original authorizations were furnished.

3.5 Confidentiality of Authorizations

Authorizations will be handled only by NMB representatives.

The NMB keeps all authorizations confidential. This includes the names

of individuals who have signed authorizations and the number of authorizations submitted. The carrier or opposing party or parties should not be privy to the number or percentage of authorizations furnished.

3.6 Check of Alphabetized Authorizations

The Investigator compares the list of potential eligible voters with the names of the employees who signed authorizations to determine if a sufficient percentage of authorizations has been submitted to require checking the validity of the authorizations. If there are insufficient authorizations submitted, the Investigator may, in his/her discretion, allow adjustments to the list prior to checking the validity of the authorizations. If the showing of interest requirement will not be met, the Investigator should allow the parties to review the eligibility list before making the required recommendation to the Chief of Staff concerning the showing of interest.

3.601 Percentage of Authorizations Required

If the craft or class involved in the investigation is represented and is covered by a valid existing contract between any such representative and the Carrier, the application must be supported by a majority (more than 50%) of valid authorizations from individuals in the craft or class. In all other circumstances, an application must be supported by at least thirty-five (35) percent of valid authorizations from individuals in the craft or class. See also NMB Rules §§1206.2 and 1206.5 (29 CFR §§1206.2 and 1206.5). The percentage of authorizations required in a merger is governed by Manual Section 18.0.

3.7 Resolving Discrepancies in Authorizations (List of Potential Eligible Voters)

If, during the check of authorizations, certain names cannot be located on the list of potential eligible voters, the Investigator should attempt to resolve this discrepancy. However, the Investigator will treat all authorizations as confidential.

4.0 REPORT RE CHECK OF AUTHORIZATIONS

4.1 Contents and Confidentiality of Report

After a check of authorizations has been completed, the Investigator

must provide the Chief of Staff with a written report of the results. The contents of the Investigator's report are confidential and will not be revealed to the organization(s), the carrier, or any individual not employed by the NMB.

5.0 FINDING OF DISPUTE - AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED BY NMB

The election will proceed after written authorization by the Chief of Staff.

The authorization will indicate that the NMB has found a dispute to exist in the subject craft(s) or class(es). The authorization will establish the manner of resolving the dispute. Copies will be sent to the involved carrier and organization(s).

6.0 DISPOSITION OF DISPUTE BY VOLUNTARY RECOGNITION

If the applicant desires to be recognized by the carrier rather than to have its application processed further, then the applicant should furnish a statement withdrawing its application. This withdrawal will be the basis for the NMB's closing of its case file.

7.0 DISPOSITION OF DISPUTES BY CHECK OF AUTHORIZATIONS

If the employees involved in the craft or class are unrepresented and only the applicant organization is involved, certification on the basis of a check of authorizations may be appropriate provided the participants agree in writing.

8.0 FILING CHALLENGES AND OBJECTIONS DURING THE INVESTIGATION

The Investigator will inform the participants in writing that they may raise challenges or objections during the investigation. Challenges involve issues concerning employee eligibility but do not include employment status changes. Objections involve all other issues or questions.

8.1 Schedule for Filing Challenges and Objections

The Investigator generally sets the schedule for challenges and objections after an election is authorized. However, the Investigator may request challenges and objections prior to authorizing an election. Challenges and objections which do not meet the simultaneous service requirements of Manual Section 1.201 will be rejected. Requests for an

extension of time must be supported by reasonable justification and submitted to the Investigator in writing. Ordinarily, each participant will be limited to one extension of time. Absent extraordinary circumstances, challenges and objections not filed by the deadline will not be considered. No request for an extension of the deadline received on the date a submission is due will be considered. The Investigator will notify the participants in writing whether an extension has been granted.

8.2 Challenges and Objections

An original and two (2) copies of all challenges or objections must be filed in writing, with the Investigator. All challenges or objections must be supported by substantive evidence. **Unsupported allegations will not be considered.** Questions or issues concerning craft or class objections must be supported by NMB case citation. Agreement by the participants regarding status changes is not determinative.

8.3 Objections to NMB Jurisdiction

Determinations of statutory jurisdiction are made by the Board. Objections to NMB jurisdiction should be raised as early as possible in the investigation. In support of a jurisdictional investigation, the Investigator may request any relevant information and documentation including whether:

- (1) the company reports to or is regulated by the Surface Transportation Board or the Department of Transportation and/or the Federal Aviation Administration;
- (2) the company is involved in interstate commerce;
- (3) the company engages in common carriage;
- (4) the company is a subsidiary involved in either rail or air transportation, the organizational and operational relationships between the subsidiary and the parent company;
- (5) the company is an airline. The investigator examines whether the company
 - a) carries U.S. mail;
 - b) engages in scheduled air transportation;
 - c) interlines with a carrier covered by the RLA; and/or
 - d) provides substitute air service for a carrier covered by the

RLA;

- (6) the company has a contract with a carrier covered by the RLA for the performance of services; and
- (7) the company has any operations which may be relevant to the NMB's jurisdictional investigation.

9.0 DETERMINATIONS

9.1 Craft or Class

In craft or class determinations, the Board considers many factors, including the composition and relative permanency of employee groupings along craft or class lines; the functions, duties, and responsibilities of the employees; the general nature of their the work; and the extent of community of interest existing between job classifications.

9.2 Eligibility

All individuals working regularly in the craft or class on and after the cut-off date are eligible to vote in an NMB representation election. Employees may not vote in more than one election at the same time.

9.201 Part-Time Employees

Only employees with a regular employee-employer relationship or scheduled work assignments are eligible to vote.

The Investigator should determine:

- (1) whether the employee works an identifiable schedule during a specified time period;
- (2) whether the employee regularly relieves other employees;
- (3) what benefits the employee receives;
- (4) what deductions are taken from the employee's pay; and

(5) other relevant facts.

9.202 Temporary Employees

Only employees with a present interest in the craft or class in dispute are eligible to vote. Temporary employees are eligible if they have a reasonable expectation of continued employment or re-employment in the craft or class.

9.203 Dismissed Employees

Dismissed employees are ineligible to vote unless the dismissal is being appealed through an applicable grievance procedure or an action for reinstatement has been filed before a court or a government agency of competent jurisdiction. If the grievance or court action is final, and the dismissal has been upheld prior to the count of ballots, the individual is ineligible to vote. See also NMB Rules §1206.6 (29 CFR §1206.6).

9.204 Furloughed Employees

Furloughed employees are eligible to vote in the craft or class in which they last worked if they retain an employee-employer relationship and have a reasonable expectation of returning to work. Furloughed employees regularly working in another craft or class are ineligible to vote in the craft or class from which the employees are furloughed.

9.205 Leave of Absence

Employees on authorized leaves of absence including military leave, leave for labor organization activities, or authorized sick leave are eligible. Employees receiving disability payments are eligible if they retain an employee-employer relationship and have a reasonable expectation of returning to work. Employees working in another craft or class, working for the carrier in an official capacity, or working for another carrier are ineligible.

9.206 Probationary Employees

Probationary employees in the craft or class in probationary status are eligible.

9.207 Working For Another Carrier

Employees working for another carrier other than the carrier involved in the dispute are ineligible.

9.208 Contractor's Employees

Employees of contractors which are not part of the carrier's transportation system are ineligible.

9.209 Individuals Based in Foreign Countries

Only employees based within the United States and/or its possessions are eligible.

9.210 Retired Employees

Retired employees are ineligible.

9.211 Management Officials

Management officials are ineligible to vote. Management officials include individuals with:

- (1) the authority to dismiss and/or discipline employees or to effectively recommend the same;
- (2) the authority to supervise;
- (3) the ability to authorize and grant overtime;
- (4) the authority to transfer and/or establish assignments;
- (5) the authority to create carrier policy;
and
- (6) the authority to commit carrier funds.

The Investigator also considers:

- (1) whether the authority exercised is circumscribed by operating and policy

manuals;

- (2) the placement of the individual in the organizational hierarchy of the carrier;
and
- (3) any other relevant factors regarding the individual's duties and responsibilities.

9.212 Preponderance

Participants asserting that employees not on the list of potential eligible voters are eligible, must provide evidence that the employees preponderantly performed job functions encompassed by the craft or class during a time period specified by the Investigator.

The Investigator will inform the participants in writing of the criteria for the preponderance check. Absent unusual circumstances, a period of 30 to 90 calendar days should be used.

10.0 APPEALS OF CHALLENGES AND OBJECTIONS

10.1 Investigator's Ruling on Challenges and Objections

The Investigator will issue a written ruling on the challenges and objections. The ruling will set forth the participants' appeal rights and the appeal deadline.

10.2 Appeals of Investigator's Ruling

All appeals must be filed with the Chief of Staff and supported by substantial evidence. If the Investigator's ruling is not appealed to the NMB by the deadline, the Investigator's ruling is final. Absent extraordinary circumstances, evidence submitted on appeal will not be considered by the NMB unless it was submitted to the Investigator.

10.201 Submissions on Appeal

The participant may file an initial position statement and/or appeal. The other participant(s) may file one response to the initial position statement or appeal. Participants may request

the opportunity to file rebuttal statements. Absent extraordinary circumstances, no further submissions will be accepted by the NMB.

10.202 Extensions of Deadlines for Appeals

Requests for an extension of the deadline for appeals must be supported by reasonable justification and submitted in writing. Absent extraordinary circumstances, no request for an extension of the deadline received on the date a submission is due will be considered.

11.0 MOTIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION

Reconsideration may not be sought from the NMB's certification or dismissal. Any motions for Reconsideration of Board determinations must be received by the Chief of Staff within two (2) business days of the decision's date of issuance. An original and one (1) copy of the motion must be filed with the Chief of Staff. The motion must comply with the NMB's simultaneous service requirements of Manual Section 1.201. The motion must state the points of law or fact which the participant believes the NMB has overlooked or misapplied and the grounds for the relief sought. Absent a demonstration of material error of law or fact or circumstances in which the NMB's exercise of discretion to modify the decision is important to the public interest, the NMB will not grant the relief sought. The mere reassertion of factual and legal arguments previously presented to the NMB is insufficient to obtain relief.

12.0 PREPARATIONS FOLLOWING AUTHORIZATION OF ELECTION

12.1 Address List

When the NMB authorizes an election, the carrier is required to furnish, within five (5) calendar days of the date of authorization, alphabetized peel-off labels bearing the names and current addresses of all employees on the list of potential eligible voters.

It is the responsibility of the carrier to provide address labels for any individuals who may be added to the list or treated as challenged voters. Unused labels will be returned or destroyed following the close of the case.

12.2 Designation of the Official Eligibility List

The "List of Potential Eligible Voters" previously obtained from the carrier and corrected, if necessary, by the Investigator constitutes the "Official Eligibility List" following an election authorization. The Investigator should notify the participants of any changes to the Official Eligibility List.

12.3 Changes in Employee Status

Changes in employee status include, but are not limited to: death, retirement, promotion to management official, transfer out of craft or class, resignation, and working for another carrier. Employees who leave the craft or class prior to the ballot count are not eligible.

The participants must advise the Investigator of any changes in employee status during the election period. Status changes should include the effective date of the change and supporting documentation. It is the carrier's responsibility to provide supporting documentation when status changes are raised by the participants. Agreement by the participants regarding status changes is not determinative.

The Investigator is not obligated to accept status changes in employee status, absent extraordinary circumstances, if this information is provided less than seven (7) calendar days before the scheduled count. The Investigator's ruling is not appealable.

13.0 TELEPHONE ELECTIONS

13.1 The Notice of Election

The NMB will provide copies of the Notice of Election/Telephone Voting Instructions (Notice) to the participants at least five calendar days before the Telephone Voting Instructions (Instructions) are mailed to the eligible voters. The Carrier must post the Notice on Carrier bulletin boards and all locations where other notices to employees usually are posted. At least one Notice per station must be posted.

13.2 Telephone Voting

13.201 Telephone Voting Instructions

The Instructions consist of the telephone voting instructions and

a Voter Identification Number (VIN). The Instructions are mailed not less than 28 days before the count. Only NMB agents administer Instructions and VINs.

13.202 Voter Identification Numbers

Each voter will be assigned a VIN to be used in conjunction with the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number. The VIN is a confidential number known only to the voter and NMB agents. The VIN is also noted on the Official Eligibility List next to the voter's name.

13.203 Personal Identification Numbers

The Personal Identification Number (PIN) is the last four digits of the voter's Social Security Number.

13.204 Telephone Voting with the PIN and VIN

To vote, the voter must call a toll-free telephone number as explained in the Instructions. The voter follows the prompts. When the voter's identity is confirmed, the voter will be prompted with voting instructions for the election.

The PIN and VIN ensure the confidentiality and the integrity of the election by eliminating unauthorized votes.

13.205 Foreign Language Notice and Instruction

When the NMB determines that eligible voters are unable to or have limited ability to read, speak or understand English, the NMB will translate the Notice, Instructions and telephone voting prompts to the appropriate foreign language as an alternative to English for the eligible voters.

13.206 Challenged Individuals

Individuals whose eligibility or ineligibility has been challenged, and no final decision has been made, will be sent Instructions and a VIN. Their votes, if cast, will be considered challenged votes. Prior to the count, the eligibility determinations will be made by the NMB election officials and appropriate adjustments to the election records will be made.

13.207 Requests for Duplicate Telephone Voting Instructions

Voters may request duplicate Instructions, including a VIN, by contacting the NMB in writing. The request must be signed by the voter requesting the Instructions and mailed in an individual envelope; group requests are not accepted. Requests by telephone, facsimile or electronic mail are not accepted. Requests received less than seven days before the count will not be honored. Requests dated or received prior to the mailing of the Instructions will not be honored.

The name of any voter requesting duplicate Instructions will be confidential. The voter will be mailed duplicate Instructions, including a VIN, and the Official Eligibility List will be marked to reflect that duplicate Instructions were mailed.

13.208 Returned Telephone Voting Instructions

Instructions returned to the NMB for incorrect addresses or any other reason, will be checked for accuracy. If a "corrected" address is obtained at least seven calendar days prior to the count, the Instructions will be mailed to the corrected address.

13.209 TTY Communications System Users

Voters may use the NMB's TTY communications system as explained in the Instructions. When the voter uses the TTY communications system, the voter must identify himself or herself with the correct PIN and VIN. NMB election officials shall assist the voter as necessary.

13.210 Adjustments to the Official Eligibility List

The Investigator will verify the number of eligible voters prior to the count by making the following adjustments:

- (1) clearing all challenges;
- (2) removing names for those individuals whose Instructions were undeliverable; and
- (3) adjusting for changes in employee status.

13.3 The Tally of Votes

13.301 Location and Time of the Tally of Votes

The voting will close at 2 p.m., Eastern time, unless the Investigator establishes an alternate time. The tally of votes will occur at the NMB's Office, in Washington, DC.

13.302 Admission and Control of the Tally of Votes

The NMB may allow a reasonable number of representatives from the Organization(s) and the Carrier to observe the tally.

13.303 Vote Determinations

13.303-1 Valid Votes

Where the voter's intent to vote for representation is clear, the vote is valid and will be counted. Valid votes include "write-in" votes which clearly indicate the voter's desire for representation.

13.303-2 Void Votes

The following votes are void and will not be counted:

- (1) votes cast for a carrier or carrier official;
- (2) votes where the voter's intent is unclear;
- (3) votes indicating no desire for representation, such as "write-ins" indicating "No" or "No Union;"
- 0.4 votes where the voter has "written in" "self," "self representation" or the equivalent; and
- 0.5 votes which identify the voter.

13.304 Tally of Votes

Following any adjustments to the list of eligible voters, the NMB agents will enter the website, tally the votes, print the tally and provide copies to the Organization(s) and the Carrier.

14.0 MAIL ELECTIONS

14.1 The Notice of Election

The NMB will provide copies of the Notice of Election/Sample Ballot ("Notice") to the participants at least five (5) calendar days before the ballots are mailed. The carrier must post the Notice on carrier bulletin boards and all locations where other notices to employees usually are posted. At least one Notice per station must be posted.

14.2 Mail Ballot Elections

14.201 Official NMB Mail Ballots

All ballots must have a non-reproducible NMB seal. Different colored ballots are used for each election to preserve the integrity of the election.

It is NMB practice to list the incumbent, the applicant and then the intervenor in descending order on the ballot. If there is no incumbent and more than one applicant, the Investigator will determine the placement of the names on the ballot.

14.202 Ballot Package

Only NMB agents handle ballot packages. A ballot package consists of the Notice of Election/Ballot and a prepaid postage ballot return envelope. The ballot package is mailed to eligible voters not less than 28 calendar days before the ballot count.

14.203 Key Numbering

Each ballot return envelope is marked with the case number and a unique key number. The key numbering system controls the integrity of the election by eliminating unauthorized ballots. The key number is also noted on the Official Eligibility List next to the name of each voter.

14.204 Challenged Ballots

Individuals whose eligibility or ineligibility has been challenged, and no final decision has been made, will be sent a ballot package.

14.205 Duplicate Ballots

Individuals listed on the Official Eligibility List may request a duplicate ballot by contacting the NMB in writing. The request must be signed by the individual requesting the ballot and mailed in an individual envelope; group requests are not accepted. Requests by telephone, facsimile or electronic mail are not accepted. Requests received less than seven (7) calendar days before the count will not be honored. Requests dated or received prior to the mailing of the ballots will not be honored.

The name of any individual requesting a duplicate ballot will be confidential. The individual will be sent a ballot package with the original key number written on the ballot return envelope. The ballot return envelope will be marked "duplicate" and the Official Eligibility List will be marked to indicate that a duplicate ballot was mailed.

14.206 Undeliverable Ballots

Ballot packages returned to the NMB for incorrect addresses will be checked for accuracy. If a "better" address is obtained at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the count, the ballot package will be sent to the better address. Otherwise, the ballot package is undeliverable.

14.207 Adjustments to the Official Eligibility List

The Investigator will verify the number of eligible voters prior to the count by making the following adjustments:

- (1) clearing all challenges;
- (2) removing names for those individuals whose ballot package was undeliverable; and
- (3) adjusting for changes in employee status.

14.3 The Ballot Count

14.301 Location and Time of the Ballot Count

The ballot count will be 2 p.m., eastern time, at the NMB's offices in Washington, DC, unless the Investigator establishes an

alternate time.

14.302 Admission and Control of the Ballot Count

It is NMB practice to allow a reasonable number of representatives from the organization(s) and the carrier to observe the ballot count.

The Investigator will ensure that the observers do not interfere with the count and that any materials identifying a voter are kept confidential.

14.303 Commencing Tally of Ballots

The Investigator will collect the ballots from the safe on the date of the count.

14.304 Ballot Determinations

14.304-1 Invalid Ballot Return Envelopes

Ballot envelopes returned without a signed attest are invalid. Ballot envelopes from individuals not on the Official Eligibility List are invalid. Invalid envelopes are not opened.

When a voter returns both the original and the duplicate ballot envelope, the original will be counted and the duplicate will be marked invalid.

14.304-2 Valid Ballots

Where the voter's intent to vote for representation is clear, the ballot is valid and will be counted. Valid ballots include write-in ballots which clearly indicate the voter's desire for representation. Where a voter has marked an "X" in the box indicating a desire for representation by "any other organization or individual" without filling in the write-in space, the ballot is valid.

14.304-3 Void Ballots

The following ballots are void and will not be counted:

- (1) ballots cast for a carrier or carrier official;

- (2) ballots marked in more than one square, where the voter's intent is unclear;
- (3) ballots indicating no desire for representation, such as ballots marked "No" or "No Union;"
- 0.4 blank ballots;
- 0.5 ballots where the voter has written in "self," "self representation" or the equivalent; and
- 0.6 ballots which identify the voter, unless the voter has placed his/her name in the write-in space on the ballot and is not identified elsewhere on the ballot.

15.0 TABULATION AND REPORT OF ELECTION RESULTS

The Investigator shall complete the count, tabulate the results, and record them on the Report of Election Results. The Investigator shall sign the Report of Election Results and provide copies to the participants.

15.1 Certifications and Dismissals

The NMB will generally issue a Certification or Dismissal based upon the Report of Election Results the next business day following the count.

16.0 RUN-OFF ELECTIONS

When a majority of the eligible voters have cast valid ballots, but no single organization or individual has received a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election may be held. All requests for run-off elections should be directed to the attention of the Chief of Staff. Run-off elections will be conducted only with written authorization of the Board. The procedures for run-off elections are set forth in the NMB Rules §1206.1 (29 CFR §1206.1).

17.0 ALLEGATIONS OF ELECTION INTERFERENCE

The NMB will investigate allegations of election interference only after the ballot count, except in extraordinary circumstances. The NMB will consider only written allegations of election interference. Allegations must be

submitted to the Chief of Staff no later than 4 p.m., eastern time, seven (7) business days after the date of the count. Participants may respond to such allegations by 4 p.m., eastern time, seven (7) business days after the Chief of Staff's receipt of the interference allegations. All submissions must comply with the simultaneous service requirements in Manual Section 1.201.

Allegations of election interference must state a prima facie case that the laboratory conditions were tainted and must be supported by substantive evidence. Allegations of election interference not sufficiently supported by substantive evidence will be dismissed.

If the NMB finds a prima facie case of election interference, the Chief of Staff will notify the participants in writing.

18.0 BARS TO REPRESENTATION APPLICATIONS

The NMB's representation bar procedures are set forth in the NMB Rules §1206.4 (29 CFR §1206.4).

19.0 MERGER PROCEDURES

19.1 Merger

Merger is a consolidation, merger, purchase, lease, operating contract, acquisition of control, or similar transaction of two or more business entities.

19.2 Authority

Pursuant to Section 2, Ninth, the NMB, upon an Application, has the authority to resolve representation disputes arising from a merger involving a Carrier or Carriers covered by the RLA. The NMB will consider these representation issues on a case-by-case basis.

19.3 Notice to NMB

A Carrier should notify the NMB, in writing, of:

- 1) An intent to merge, at the same time it files with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) or the Department of Transportation (DOT); AND
- 2) A completed merger including the date of the merger and the

Carriers (or business entities) involved.

Notices must comply with the service requirements of Manual Section 1.201.

19.4 Initiation of Procedure for Determination of a Single Transportation System

Any organization or individual may file an application, supported by evidence of representation, seeking a NMB determination that a single transportation system exists.

19.401 If the organization or individual filing the application represents any of the employees covered by the application, the organization or individual must submit evidence of representation including, but not limited to, a seniority list, dues check-off list, a current collective bargaining agreement or a certification, or other indicia of current representation.

19.402 If the organization or individual filing the application does not represent any of the employees covered by the application, but the employees are represented, the organization or individual must submit authorization cards from a majority (more than 50%) of the employees in the craft or class. (See Manual Section 3.601.)

19.403 If the organization or individual filing the application does not represent any of the employees covered by the application and the employees are unrepresented, pursuant to the NMB Rules §1206.2(b) (CFR § 1206.2(b)), the organization or individual filing the application must submit authorization cards from at least thirty-five (35) percent of the employees in the craft or class.

19.5 Merger Investigations

After an application is filed, the NMB will conduct a pre-docket investigation to determine whether a single transportation system exists. The investigation may take any form appropriate to the determination.

19.501 Factors Indicating a Single Transportation System

The following are some indicia of a single transportation system:

- (1) published combined schedules or combined routes;
- (2) standardized uniforms;
- (3) common marketing, markings or insignia;
- (4) integrated essential operations such as scheduling or dispatching;
- (5) centralized labor and personnel operations;
- (6) combined or common management, corporate officers, and board of directors;
- (7) combined workforce; and
- (8) common or overlapping ownership.

19.6 Procedure After Finding Single Transportation System

If the NMB determines that a single transportation system exists, the investigation will proceed to address the representation of the proper craft or class. (See Manual Section 18.401.) The bar rules in NMB Rules §1206.4 (29 CFR § 1206.4) do not apply to applications filed under Manual Section 18.6.

19.601 Showing of Interest on the Single Transportation System

Incumbent organizations have thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the NMB's single transportation system determination to file an application supported by at least a thirty-five (35) percent showing of interest or to supplement the showing of interest.

19.602 Status of Representation Certifications

Existing certifications remain in effect until the NMB issues a new certification or dismissal.

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